

USES OF VERB TENSES

SIMPLE PRESENT

- 1.- When we talk about a present moment: *I'm in Albacete now.*
- 2.- We use it to talk about things in general: *I have got two brothers.*
- 3.- To say that something happens all the time or is a habit (every day life): *I smoke.*
- 4.- When something is always true: *Madrid is the capital of Spain.*
- 5.- We can use it with a future meaning when we're talking about planned actions, timetables or programs: *The train leaves London at night.*

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

- 1.- When we talk about something which is happening at the time of speaking:
It's raining now (activity in progress)
- 2.- When we talk about a period about the present:
You are working hard today / This week I'm reading an interesting book.
- 3.- For eventual actions: *I'm living here until I can find a better flat.*
- 4.- When we talk about changing situations: *The population is rising very fast.*
- 5.- When we talk about what we have already arranged to do (planned intention)
What are you doing tomorrow? I'm going to the cinema.
- 6.- For immediate future: *Be careful! The ice is going to break.*

verbs which cannot be used in continuous forms:

- 1.- VERBS OF OPINION: *think* (when it means "creer", because when it means "pensar" it's possible to use in a continuous way) - *believe* - *know* - *forget* - *recognize* - *suppose* - *understand* - *remember* - *realize* - *imagine* - *mean*.
- 2.- VERBS OF FEELING: *want* - *like* - *love* - *hate* - *prefer* - *wish*.
- 3.- VERBS OF PERCEPCION: *see* (when it means "ver", but you can use it in continuous tenses when it means "reunirse con"[1]) - *hear* - *smell* - *taste*.
- 4.- VERBS OF RELATION: *have* (when it means "poseer", but when it means "experimentar", you can use it in continuous forms [2]) - *own* - *contain* - *cost* - *sound* - *seem* - *belong* - *include* - *weigh* - *appear* - *need*.

[1] *I'm seeing a friend tomorrow.* [2] *Susan is having a lot of problems.*

SIMPLE PAST

- 1.- It's used when the past happening is related to a definite time in the past, which we may call "**then**" (it started in the past and finished in the past):
He finished school 15 years ago.
- 2.- To organize several actions in the past (one after another):
She opened the door, looked at the man and said

PAST CONTINUOUS

- 1.- We use it to say that someone is in the middle of doing something at a certain time in the past. The action or situation had already started before, but it hadn't finished. If the action is interrupted by a complete action, in this case we have to use a verb in simple past: *Tom **was cooking** the dinner when the telephone **rang**.*
*Tom **cooked** the dinner* (he was and finished it).
- 2.- For two incomplete actions taking place simultaneously:
Peter was listening to music while Tom was cooking.

PRESENT PERFECT

1.- It's used when the speaker is referring to something which begins in the past and continues up to the moment of speaking (or recently).

If I say *I have lost my key*, you think that I haven't got it now, but if I say *I lost my key*, it was in a punctual moment in the past without connection with the present.

2.- *In my life up to now.... I have been to many countries. I've been to Italy...*

We use it when we speak in a no definite time.

In this example we can use "*been*" as the past participle of "go". It means "*travelled to and return from*".

3.- When the result of a past action is connected to the present. The "news" use:

Tim has fallen again and is holding his leg.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

It's used with action verbs when you want to explain the idea of activity in progress in the pre-present period. It refers to activities continuing until now or recently.

It has been raining, but it was stopped now.

PAST PERFECT

It's used to make clear which event in a sequence precede which. (past in the past). It's when we're talking about the past and want to refer to an earlier time in the past: *I **opened** my eyes and the snake **had disappeared**.*

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

It's for activity in progress in a previous moment of the past:

*I **had been driving** for 3 hours, so I was tired this day.*

SIMPLE FUTURE

1.- For predictions: *Tomorrow is going to snow.*

2.- When you decide something in the very moment: *I'll have a salad to start with.*

FUTURE CONTINUOUS

To talk about activities that will be in progress at a particular time in the future:

In the year 2020, we will be living on the moon.

FUTURE PERFECT

To talk about activities that will be finished before a particular time in the future. We often use this tense with time phrases beginning with **by** (which means *before*)

By the year 2050, Spain will have won the World Cup.